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Guide for Teachers OF Marshaling the Forces of Patriotism

A COURSE OF TWELVE STUDIES
FOR USE IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

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THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN

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GUIDE FOR TEACHERS OF MARSHALING THE FORCES OF PATRIOTISM

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

The primary reason for the preparation of this course of study is the fact that we are at war. We came to the place where it seemed that the only possible way to maintain those things that we value more than life was to take up the sword and fight. Now we are in the fray. The life of the nation is at stake. But more than that, the principles of justice and righteousness are hanging in the balance. It is the first duty of every citizen at this time to know the issues and to throw his full strength into the struggle for liberty and right.

At such a time the church cannot be silent. People are asking, what does the war mean to government? what does it mean to business? what does it mean to industry? but most of all, what does it mean to the most fundamental things of life? This is the hardest and the most important question. The first message of the church is here, and even though our vision be not entirely clear and complete we must speak the words that we have.

Three main things are needed: clear thinking, high moral standards and enthusiastic devotion. The message of this course is for the strengthening of each of these. The teacher has the privilege of doing a fine piece of patriotic work in teaching this course. Some feel that these are sorrowful times and half wish that they did not live now. It is true that the days are dark, but it is also true that these are great times. The world after the war will

not be as it is or as it was. It will be different. Whether it will be better or worse will depend on the vigor and devotion of those to whom the kingdom of God is more than meat and drink.

The teacher should take special care to see that the course does not end in talk, but works out into action. Some of those who study it will be called to military service. All of the others are called to loyal service at home. As you study look over the ground and build a program. Is there any unharnessed energy in your community? Is there any effort going to ineffective ends? Is there a single need unmet? See that the class work does not stop until plans are made and action taken to fill these gaps.

It is of the highest importance that the teacher should not merely lecture the students, but that the class work should be a real study period. Each member of the group should have a share in the discussion. The teacher has a twofold task—to prod the thinking of the students and to keep the discussion from being sidetracked to unimportant details.

The book is suitable for individual reading and may be used in special study groups, but its chief use will be in senior and adult classes in the Sunday school. The regular Sunday-school lessons should be cared for by home study and most or all of the class period given to the special course. The extra effort will be well repaid.

CHAPTER I

WHY WE ARE AT WAR

In this chapter we have a discussion of a topic on which the students already have a considerable amount of information. The *teaching aim* should therefore be to organize the knowledge already possessed, to supplement it where necessary and to develop sufficiently clear convictions to lead to definite service to the nation.

The discussion may be opened by the question, "Why is it necessary to ask the question of why we are at war?" It may be argued that the only thing that matters is that we are at war and that the thing that needs to be done now is not to talk about the reasons for our participation in the struggle, but to put our whole thought and effort on the carrying on of the battle. The answer to this objection is made clear in the early part of the chapter.

The next step in the discussion should be the raising of the question, "What were the immediate reasons for a declaration of war?" Following this the teacher may ask this, "What evidences have we that Germany purposed to make herself master

of the world?" For the summing up of the topic it may be well to ask such a question as, "Considered all in all, what seems to have been the best plan of procedure for the United States?"

There is an abundance of material for additional reading on the topic of this chapter. Probably some of the students have already read Ambassador Gerard's book, *My Four Years in Germany*. The official communications that passed between the United States and Germany might be examined for their light on the topic. The series of addresses by President Wilson on the relation of the United States to the war are of special value. In addition to these there is an unlimited amount of readily accessible material in books and magazines. It will be well to encourage individual students to make investigations and report to the class. Remember that one of our chief tasks is to help develop clear and careful thinking upon the problems before us, for this is essential to real patriotism.

CHAPTER II

THE RELIEF OF THE OPPRESSED

We have slowly come to learn that we cannot live as individuals apart from all of our neighbors. We have discovered that it is both a privilege and an obligation to live with others. We have come to the place where most of us are ready to say that Christianity is a "social" gospel and demands "social" living. But while we admit that individuals must take account of other individuals in the same community, we have been inclined to feel that nations can live apart from each other. Some have taken the ground that as long as the territory of the United States is not attacked it is not our war and we should keep out of it. Now the business of this chapter is to show that nations as

well as individuals must be neighbors. The teacher should aim to get the students not merely to agree to this, but to feel it, and to feel it so keenly that they will be ready to go out and regulate their lives in harmony with this idea.

The first question discussed might be this, "What answer would you make to the individual who said that if we would keep our ships at home we would not need to go to war?" Ask the class to explain the origin and purpose of the Chinese wall. It was built many centuries ago and was for the purpose of keeping the Chinese in and the foreigners out. The result of this studied policy to live by themselves was that the Chinese as a nation became stag-

nant, and the outside nations were cut off from the advantages of contact with a particularly high type of civilization. The next step in the discussion should be the asking of the question, "To what extent would it be possible for the United States to live by itself today?"

Continue the discussion to bring out clearly the two points, that we owe it to ourselves to see that justice is done throughout the world, that we owe it to the other nations to see that might does not make right, but that the weaker as well as the stronger should have a chance.

CHAPTER III

DEMOCRACY WORTH FIGHTING FOR

We are very boastful of our democracy, but perhaps it would puzzle us to explain what democracy really is. The aim of this week's study is to make the meaning of democracy so clear that the students will be ready to make real sacrifices to defend it.

As an assignment for home study in preparation for this lesson different members of the class might be asked to prepare themselves to give three-minute reports on the form of government in several different countries, such as England, Canada, Germany, France, Austria, Belgium. Information on these points can be readily obtained in encyclopedias and other reference books.

The class work should then be opened

by asking each student to report on the results of his investigation. Concerning each the class should discuss the question, "Is it fair to say that this country has a democratic form of government?" It would be well to notice also the points in which the government in question differs from that of the United States.

Be sure to make clear the difference between democracy and anarchy. This is a difference that we run great risk of neglecting. The question, "What effect would a German victory have upon the practice of government by the people?" will bring the discussion to a focus and should be considered carefully, for it is the crux of the whole problem.

CHAPTER IV

PAYING THE PRICE

American young men and women are not as ready as the citizens of some other nations to obey orders that they do not understand. This independence and self-determination is good. We do not want to raise up a nation of machines; we seek to develop men and women. We hope that they will so use their God-given powers of thinking and choosing that they will show that they are really created in His image.

But our greatest danger at this time is not that our young people will give blind obedience to unreasonable commands, but that they may fail to yield to any sense of obligation at all. The teacher's chief

task in this chapter will be to help the students to such a vision of duty that their devotion and self-forgetfulness will be finer than that of those who are less independent and democratic. The first three chapters have *argued* the question. Now it is essential that the class should feel the pull of a great challenge.

The class session should be serious, but not solemn. Great things are at stake, but optimism rather than pessimism should be in evidence. The study should issue in covenants that will be kept perhaps with the price of blood, but this is not so much terrible as it is glorious. We have in our day beautiful illustrations of the teaching

of Jesus that "he that loseth his life shall find it."

A good teaching plan may be built up around the questions given in the textbook at the end of the chapter. These may be discussed in some detail with such other

points as may arise in the class. The session should close with prayer if the class is sufficiently removed from the remainder of the school to allow the necessary quiet and seclusion. In any case the prayerful spirit should be prominent.

CHAPTER V

THE CALL TO ENLIST

This and the next three chapters deal with very practical activities. See that each issue in definite plans for work. Make ambitious plans. The hour demands big things. Do not be satisfied with helping nor with helping much. Do the biggest thing you can think of. Our untapped resources are beyond our own knowledge. When the war began many felt that at the rate that it was going it could not last more than a year at most. Now it has lasted several years at a far greater pace. Winston Churchill said recently that this year would be the hardest yet. We think we are doing much, but we may and probably will have to do immensely bigger things than we have yet done. Remember that we are in the war to win, and that the harder we go at it now the sooner we will be over with it.

As a preparation for the teaching of this lesson, spend some time in making a list of

the various things that the members of your class, both as individuals and as a group, could do to help in the nation's war tasks. Mark specially those that are not being done. Then mark those that are only being partly done. Do not show this to the class, but keep it for your own use. During the class session raise the three questions you had put to yourself, "What can we do?" "What are we not doing?" "What are we not doing thoroughly?" Put on the blackboard the items mentioned by the members of the class. By question and suggestion bring out points that are overlooked by the class. Do not fail to make out a definite program of war work. If you do not think of a considerable number of things not yet being done it will be because you have not done enough thinking. It is probably safe to say that none of us have measured up to our largest opportunities.

CHAPTER VI

FOOD CONSERVATION AND WAR GARDENS

This lesson should be particularly easy to teach. Most of us can help produce food and all can help conserve it. Build the lesson plan around these questions:

1. What are the main things that the Food Administration asks of us?

2. Just why is it necessary to make these special plans?

3. In what specific ways can this class cooperate with the program?

4. What can we do to bring the matters to the attention of other people and secure their cooperation?

CHAPTER VII

THE RED CROSS, THE RED TRIANGLE AND THE WAR WORK OF THE CHURCHES

These and similar topics may be assigned to members of the group for advance study (one to each student):

1. Red Cross work in the war zones.
2. The work of the Home Service Department of the Red Cross.
3. Special relief for Armenia and Syria.
4. Red Triangle work.
5. Blue Triangle work.

6. The war work of the churches (see the church papers for reports and plans of this work).

At the class session reports should be received from each of the students. The main points of the reports may be put on the blackboard. Time should be reserved for a careful discussion of the question, "What can we do to help in each of these tasks?"

CHAPTER VIII

SAFEGUARDING CHRISTIAN PROGRESS

The points discussed in this chapter are exceedingly important, but are easily overlooked. They should receive careful attention. The discussion might follow some such plan as this:

1. That we may be able to see the relation of this chapter to the whole, recall our definition of the purposes for which we are fighting—democracy, justice, brotherhood.

2. Could these things be obtained and preserved without the aid of the spirit of Christ in the world?

3. In what ways then can churches, schools and foreign missions help to establish democracy, justice and brotherhood?

4. Is it possible to carry on the war vigorously and at the same time give increased support to these institutions?

CHAPTER IX

THE WORLD IN THE MAKING

Professor Fosdick in his book, "The Challenge of the Present Crisis," points out that this war is being fought on the way up and not on the way down. Whatever we may say about the war itself, we must admit that the world has been headed toward better things and is still looking in that direction. Keep this thought uppermost in your teachings of this week. Send your young people out to the battle with a vision of a new and beautiful world in which righteousness shall prevail. Send them out with a fierce determination not to rest until all that hurts and spoils and hinders shall be done away and justice and brotherhood shall dwell in all the world.

By question and suggestion gather up the evidences that we have that the world is growing better. Do not be frightened by the multitude of evil things, but in each case compare them with conditions that obtained in earlier times, and see how many places show some progress. The next step should be to bring out some of the elements that will enter into the new and better world before us. Dwell particularly on the difference between "the people's will and the people's mood."

The final step in the lesson plan should be a discussion of practical ways by which the members of the class can now cooperate in the task of building this new world.



CHAPTER X

THE WAR AGAINST WAR

The real task here is not to prove that war should be abolished. We are all or nearly all ready to admit that the big question is, "How can we best fight against war?"

Probably many members of your class have known or heard of individuals who believe that nonresistance is the quickest and surest road to peace. Ask them to

state the arguments that "pacifists" use to show that their position is correct. When the points have been made call for the arguments on the other side. The problem hinges about three main questions: "What place is there for force in a world of peace?" "What place will love have in a world of peace?" "How can force and love get along together?"

CHAPTER XI

THE FIGHT WHICH IS WORTHY THE GOAL

The approach to the class work on this chapter might be varied by proposing that the members of the class suggest the questions to be discussed. If sufficient points are not brought up the questions at

the end of the chapter in the textbook may be discussed. The topic is of first importance and should be dealt with thoroughly. There is a real danger lest we forget that our fight is for righteousness.

CHAPTER XII

THE INVISIBLE KING

Our approach to the problem before us has been from the religious point of view, but this chapter deals specifically with that matter. The topic is of the greatest importance. We should do our best to see that the faith of our young people be not unsteadied by the strain and difficulties of the present situation, but be strengthened and purified.

The discussion might well center about the following questions. How do you explain the fact that the Kaiser and other German leaders continually declare that God is on their side, and we and our allies believe that God's favor is with us? (The answer is, of course, that some one must be mistaken.) What then do you think of the prayer of a notable member of one of our churches: "Oh, Lord, our God, help us to be more anxious to be on thy side than to have thee on our side"?

What right have we to think that God is on our side? Which is in the worst difficulty, the man who says that God is good and powerful, and then has to admit that evil continues to exist in the world, or the man who does not admit the existence of God, and then has to admit that there are a great many God-like things in the world? Just what does prayer in war time do for us? What are the kinds of things for which we should pray?

The final study should end with prayer, preferably by the students as well as the teacher, that the God of all wisdom and love may enlighten our understanding and may guide us in the way of all truth and that we may realize that while we engage in proclaiming his truth and establishing his righteousness the spirit of the Christ will be with us always even unto the end of the world.

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